

Today's News - Wednesday, September 16, 2015

EDITOR'S NOTE: Tomorrow is a no-newsletter day (Architects Regatta!) - we'll be back Friday, September 18.

- Kennicott on DS+R's The Broad museum in L.A.: "Too much bad art overwhelms great architecture."
- Wainwright x 2: he gets a rare peek at North Korea's capital Pyongyang that is turning into the "socialist fairyland" of "Pyonghattan": "The whole place feels slightly unreal, a mock-up of activity hastily assembled for visitors" (his photos are fabulous, too!).
- He cheers the "ramshackle restoration" of a "derelict pleasure palace" in London that "leaves the tattiness intact, a beguiling Tardis of Victoriana."
- Heathcote warns that grand plans often obliterate the kinds of spaces "that can accommodate the ad hoc culture that drives urban creativity. The irony is that success squeezes out exactly the kind of cheap, flexible spaces that made the city succeed in the first place" (he does find a few bright spots).
- A geographer debunks "Texas exceptionalism" and red flags being waved about Houston's lack of zoning codes: "Houston isn't that unusual at all. Houston is downright all-American! Zoning, or lack thereof, is a red herring."
- King bemoans San Francisco's "environmental apathy" when it comes to considering rising waters: "distant threats are no match for topical dramas."
- Feinstein offers 10 "game-changing designs that hold promise to protect citizens against flooding."
- A new apartment block by Woods Bagot in Melbourne's eastern suburb "aims to foster a sense of community, a concept not customarily associated with newly built apartments. Now more than ever, architects and designers are tasked with replicating the conditions associated with the Great Aussie Dream."
- Four great takes on hits (and misses) "in the affordable housing debate" in New York City, Chicago, Austin, and San Jose.
- Six teams are in the running to connect Tampa's new Pier Park to downtown - including the team that won the park part (and everyone promises "to play well with each other").
- Dunlap shakes out what went into creating Dattner's salt shed on the Manhattan waterfront: "it is hard not to see a giant salt grain. Folded, creased, dimpled and chamfered, its windowless, enigmatic facade is like a monumental work of origami."
- O'Sullivan reports on a competition, to launch next year, for a €700 million revamp of Paris's much-reviled Tour Montparnasse: the "declared objective: to create a 'Parisian Times Square.'"
- The Zoological Lighting Institute's Save a Billion Birds! campaign "seeks local bans of bird-killing glass for all new construction as well as remediation of existing glass."
- PARK(ing) Day 2015 is this Friday (its 10th anniversary)!
- Winners all: Triple Bridge Waterfront Architecture Competition for development along the Liepaja Canal in Latvia + The "compelling letters" that won the Dear Architecture Competition.
- Call for entries: Varna Regional Library (Bulgaria) open international architectural competition + 2016 Rome Prize + 2016 Berkeley Prize Essay Competition: "Sheltering Those in Need: Architects Confront Homelessness."

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The problem with The Broad is the collection itself: Too much bad art overwhelms great architecture in Eli Broad's new museum in L.A.: The prevailing theology of many public buildings today...is about erasing the line between the city and the structure...The Broad is more inward-looking...Perhaps without intending to do so, it recaptures some of the spiritual drama of the much-maligned monumental museums of yesteryear... By Philip Kennicott -- Diller Scofidio + Renfro- Washington Post

The Pyonghattan project: how North Korea's capital is transforming into a 'socialist fairyland': ...in Pyongyang Kim Jong-un is carving out a reputation as a champion of modern facilities for the country's new middle class...the hermit kingdom announced its intention to welcome two million tourists a year by 2020...The whole place feels slightly unreal, a mock-up of activity hastily assembled for visitors. By Oliver Wainwright [images]- Guardian (UK)

Wilton's Music Hall, London: derelict pleasure palace gets a ramshackle restoration: Tucked behind a row of terraces, this vast barrel-vaulted venue is the East End's best-kept secret. Now, thanks to an overhaul that leaves the tattiness intact, a beguiling Tardis of Victoriana is open for business once more. By Oliver Wainwright -- Tim Ronalds Architects [images]- Guardian (UK)

Cities risk obliterating reasons for success: Much is made of grand plans...real life takes place in the interstices...the alleys, industrial buildings, draughty studios...that can accommodate the ad hoc culture that drives urban creativity...as cities' centres are gentrified and rebuilt, it is exactly these ill defined spaces that disappear. The irony is that success squeezes out exactly the kind of cheap, flexible spaces that made the city succeed in the first place. By Edwin Heathcote- Financial Times (UK)

Debunking Texas Exceptionalism: De-Regulation Will Not Save Us: Houston has a de facto zoning problem: If zoning was all that and a bag of chips, shouldn't Houston look significantly different from Dallas or, gasp, Columbus, Ohio? ...Houston isn't that unusual at all. Houston is downright all-American! Zoning, or lack thereof, is a red herring. By Jim Russell- Pacific Standard

Vision for future needs to account for the rising waters all around us: Good luck with that...distant threats are no match for topical dramas...The latest example of environmental apathy is a stalled design competition to help the general public understand how such prosaic tasks as wetland restoration could enrich the region's landscape. By John King- San Francisco Chronicle

10 Designs Fighting The Devastating Effects of Climate Change: ...game-changing designs that hold promise to protect citizens against flooding... By Laura Feinstein -- King Mongkut's University of Technology in Thonburi (KMUTT); Carl Turner Architects; Margot Krasojevic; Act_Romegialli; Baird & Associates/Sasaki Associates; BIG - Bjarke Ingels Group; Nordarch; Todd Fix/FIXd Architecture/Design; Najjar & Najjar Architects; Waterstudio.nl [images]- GOOD Magazine

Can multiresidential apartments support the suburban Australian lifestyle? The rapid development and densification of Melbourne's eastern suburbs continues...a \$77 million multi residential apartment block...aims to foster a sense of community, a concept not customarily associated with newly built apartments...Now more than ever, architects and designers are tasked with replicating the conditions associated with the Great Aussie Dream. -- Woods Bagot; Jack Merlo Design- Australian Design Review

Finding Affordability: AN looks at conditions on the ground in the affordable housing debate...in four cities...New York City; Chicago, Illinois; Austin, Texas; and San Jose, California. By Henry Melcher, John Gendall, Chris Bentley, and Jack Murphy/Baldridge Architects -- Bernheimer Architecture; Kohn Pedersen Fox (KPF); ARUP; OLIN; STUDIO V; James Corner Field Operations; FXFOWLE; MHG Architects; Magnusson Architecture and Planning; Dattner Architects/Grimshaw Architects; NIA Architects; Rhode Partners; Dick Clark + Associates [images]- The Architect's Newspaper

Usual suspects fight for design job of \$20 million Pier Approach project: Six design teams are vying for the project that will link Tampa's new Pier Park to downtown...Former competitors for the Pier Park project are pledging to play well with each other. -- ASD/Rogers Partners/Ken Smith Landscape Architect; AECOM; W Architecture and Landscape Architecture; Civitas/Mesh Architecture/Studio @620; Alfonso Architects; OT9 Design/Rhoads Group- Tampa Bay Times (Florida)

A Building That Resembles What It Stores: Salt for New York City's Roads: Looking at the \$20 million Spring Street Salt

Shed...on the Manhattan waterfront, it is hard not to see a giant salt grain...Folded, creased, dimpled and chamfered, its windowless, enigmatic facade is like a monumental work of origami. By David W. Dunlap -- Dattner Architects [images]- New York Times

A Revamp for Paris's Least Favorite Building: A redesign competition has been announced for Tour Montparnasse and its surrounding mall and plaza: ...due for a €700 million makeover...an architectural competition was announced...declared objective: to create a "Parisian Times Square"... By Feargus O'Sullivan- CityLab (formerly The Atlantic Cities)

The Zoological Lighting Institute Urges Total Ban on Unprotected Bird-Killing Glass in Proposed Construction Projects: ...its 'Save a Billion Birds!' Campaign seeks local bans of bird-killing glass for all new construction as well as remediation of existing glass. -- James Karl Fischer- BusinessWire

PARK(ing) Day 2015: ...an annual worldwide event where artists, designers and citizens transform metered parking spots into temporary public parks. Friday, September 18- PARK(ing) Day

Winners of Triple Bridge Waterfront Architecture Competition selected: ...ideas for the proposed development along the Liepaja Canal [Latvia]...winners from China, United States, and Germany. -- Sun Yu/Zhao Xue; Ka Leung Yuen/Sze Kwan Wan; Pablo Rodríguez Parada [images]- HMMD / Homemade Dessert

Winners of the Dear Architecture Competition Challenge the Profession with Open Letters: "Winners penned compelling letters that tackle...social exclusion by way of poor urbanism, the underrepresentation of women...and architecture's response (or lack thereof) to new environmental concerns such as fracking." -- Craig L. Wilkins, PhD, RA; Vershaé Hite/Brittany Eaker Kirkland; Lewis Williams- Blank Space

Call for entries: Varna Regional Library (Bulgaria) open international architectural competition; no fee; cash prizes; deadline: November 9- Municipality of Varna / Chamber of Architects in Bulgaria

Call for entries: 2016 Rome Prize: awarded to emerging and established artists and scholars working in Architecture, Design, Historic Preservation and Conservation, Landscape Architecture, etc.; fellowships include a stipend, room and board, and workspace at AAR in Rome; deadline: November 1 - American Academy in Rome

Call for entries: 2016 Berkeley Prize Essay Competition: "Sheltering Those in Need: Architects Confront Homelessness"; open to full-time undergraduate students enrolled in any architecture degree program or majoring in architecture throughout the world; Stage 1 (500-word essay proposal) deadline: November 1 - Berkeley Prize / Department of Architecture, University of California, Berkeley

Architecture's New Scientific Foundations, Part 3: Adaptive vs. Random Complexity, Part 2. Nourishing environments are complex yet highly organized, but cannot be minimalistic. By Nikos A. Salingaros- ArchNewsNow.com

Being Frank Gehry: Paul Goldberger's account of the architect's rise is also a tale of things not going Gehry's way: "Building Art: The Life and Work of Frank Gehry" is a compelling biography of perhaps the world's most famous architect. And yet it is also, to a great extent, a list of Gehry's disappointments. By Fred A. Bernstein- ArchNewsNow.com

Colorful Condensations: Mikkel Frost's CEBRA Toons: Can a single drawing sum up the complexity of a sizable built project? ...hand-drawn Toons...amalgamates various drawing techniques into playful architectural sonnets...communicate the insistence on a room for optimism, playfulness, and vigor in contemporary architecture. [images]

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